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341 side, the blank surfaces at the gable ends and under the eaves being decorated with black and white arabesques. The doors in the wooden fronts are carved, and the window spaces closed with lattices of intricate and unusual designs. The houses, as in all parts of China, are built on the court-yard plan, but are usually two storied.

This style of architecture is not of course peculiar to Ta Li, and there is no difference between the houses inhabited by Min Chia and by Chinese. If there was ever an indigenous type of house unlike the Chinese kind, it has entirely disappeared. On the other hand, the custom of decorating the end walls with black and white arabesque patterns is peculiar to the Ta Li region and is not found in other parts of Yunnan. The small pointed windows let into the end and back walls, another peculiarity of Ta Li houses, are not found in ordinary Chinese designed houses and these, and the decoration found in conjunction with them, may perhaps be attributed to Moslem influence.

351 247 Every residential house has a garden as well as the central courtyard. The garden, part of which is used for vegetables, is usually shaded with fine trees and gay with flowering shrubs. The camelia or tea tree, of which there are many varieties, is very popular at Ta Li in the winter months. In summer, roses, azaleas and rhododendrons (the latter with difficulty acclimatised to the lower altitude), give a constant succession of flowers, and the plants are trained with loving care into strange shapes representing Chinese characters for happiness and good luck. The people of Ta Li are keen amateur gardeners and in recent years many foreign flowers such as zinnias and marigolds have been introduced. Loquats, oranges and pears are grown, although the quality of fruit from the eastern shore of the lake is much superior. These trees are grown in Ta Li more for their blossom than for the fruit.

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the knife edge crest of the Ts'ang Shan range, in a hollow covered with a luxuriant growth of golden rhododendrons of great size. In winter, at 14,000ft. it is inaccessible, being deep in snow, but from the end of April it can be reached, and in May or early June, when the rhododendrons are in flower against great banks of unmelted snow lying round the still clear water of the tarn, it is a place of rare beauty, a natural garden owing nothing to the hand of man. A further short climb to the crest of the range opens up the immense panorama of western Yunnan, to ranges far west of the Mekong River, more than one hundred miles away, while northwards there is an unbroken view of the great Yu Lung Shan snow range, 20,000 feet or more, on the borders of Tibet.

Curiously enough although the Min Chia are fond of flowers and cultivate many varieties of camelia in their courtyard gardens very few of them even know the names of the mountain flowers which at all seasons are so prolific. Since they confine their excursions to a few places, where some of these flowers do not grow, they have no name for the wild blue irises which are found in the mountain gorges, or the pansies and crocuses which carpet the grass under the trees of the high rain forest in May. They cultivate a few varieties of azalea, which on Ts'ang Shan is the common shrub growing as thickly as heather on a Scottish mountain. Rhododendrons are not easily acclimatised to the lower level of the plain, for the best and largest grow on the higher slopes and up to the crest itself. Rock orchids and other varieties growing in the bamboo forest are sometimes brought down and grown, more or less successfully, in pots, but the Min Chia have made no attempt to cultivate the wild fruit, raspberries and red currants, which flourish in the higher valleys and gorges on Ts'ang Shan.